

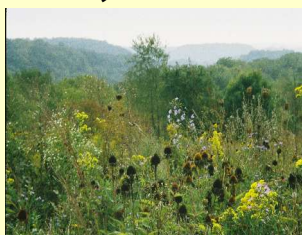
Prairie UU Society, 2010 Whenona Drive, Madison WI 53711-4843  
(608) 271-48218 admin@uuprairie.org  
Located off the south frontage road (West Beltline Hwy Rd.) near the Seminole Hwy exit.



# PRAIRIE FIRE

*"As the prairie stretches out until it becomes one with the sky, let us reach out to touch and be one with the natural world and with one another."*

**November 24, 2006**



*Prairie Fire is the semi-monthly newsletter of Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society. View past issues at [www.uuprairie.org](http://www.uuprairie.org).*

President: Mike Briggs. (608) 835-0914

Editor: Dan Proud, admin@uuprairie.org; 661-0776

## PRAIRIE CALENDAR

### Sunday, November 26

9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal  
\*10:00 a.m. "The Road Not Taken" led by Mary Mullen and Barb Park  
\*7:00 p.m. "Grateful I'm Not Dead" concert by Maggie Siegfried

### Tuesday, November 28

\*2:00 p.m. Prairie Elders meets at Oakwood West

### Wednesday, November 29

6:30 p.m. Midweek Meal @ Prairie  
7:30 p.m. Covenant Group discusses "The Left Hand of God".

### Thursday, November 30

7:30 p.m. Social Action Committee Meeting

### Saturday, December 2

\*5:00 p.m. Andy Somers' Birthday Party

## NEXT INPUT DEADLINE SUNDAY, DECEMBER 9

### Sunday, December 3

9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal  
\*10:00 a.m. "Dreams Unfulfilled? The Lives of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony" presented by the Rev. Ralph Tyksinski  
\*11:45 a.m. Parish Meeting

### Wednesday, December 6

6:30 p.m. Midweek Meal  
7:30 p.m. Program Committee Meeting

### Thursday, December 7

\*7:00 p.m. Prairie Film Group views *The Conversation*

### Sunday, December 10

9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal  
\*10:00 a.m. "Child Labor and Dalit Rights in India" presented by Rebecca Malke-Eligenti and John Eligenti  
\*10:00 a.m. Nifty Gifty in R.E.  
\*11:30 a.m. Book Group potluck and discussion

CANCELED—Fundraising trip to Old Orchard Center

(\* = Details follow in this issue.)

### **Wednesday, December 13**

6:30 p.m. Midweek Meal

\*7:30 p.m. Doleta Chapru's Birthday Party

### **Thursday, December 14**

6:30 p.m. Everyday Spiritual Practice Covenant Group

### **Sunday, December 17**

9:00 a.m. Choir rehearsal

\*10:00 a.m. "Prairie's Winter Wonderland, a Celebration of a Magical Season," led by Dorothy Krause

\*12:30 Humanist Union sponsors HumanLight celebration

### **Sunday, December 24**

No choir rehearsal

\*10:00 a.m. Symbol tree service led by Erin Bosch

### **Tuesday, December 26**

5:00 a.m. Prairie serves breakfast at Men's Shelter

### **Sunday, January 14–Sunday, January 21**

\*Interfaith Hospitality Network Shift

(\* = *Details follow in this issue.*)

## **DETAILS OF COMING PROGRAMS**

### **Sunday, November 26**

On a daily basis, we make decisions, some minor, but some with momentous consequences for our lives. The November 26 service, titled after Robert Frost's well-known and beloved poem, "The Road Not Taken," will be a program about decisions and how we make our peace—or don't—with the path we did not take as well as the one we did choose.

To get people thinking about their choices that have "made all the difference," the service will begin with a panel of Prairie people who will talk briefly about some of their decisions. Then the congregation—in small groups—will have an opportunity to share their stories of lives they might have had and how they feel about not having taken those routes.

Sure to be a part of both discussions are the decisions themselves. Were they spur-of-the-moment and easy to make or hardly even recognized as an important turning point? Were

they heart-rending struggles, perhaps even forced by circumstances? What went into the decisions? Was there a spiritual motivation? Did they begin with soul-searching or cause soul-searching? Perhaps they could be characterized as part of "a free and responsible search for truth and meaning," the fourth principle of the UUA.

This is the kind of service that we especially invite newer people in our community to attend since it will offer insights into the lives of the congregation. If things run true to form, "old" members may also be in for some unexpected treats.

### **Sunday, December 3**

In this reflection, Rev. Ralph will be exploring the lives of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony as metaphors rather than frozen images from 19th-century grayscale photographic plates. These are metaphors for lives lived with the fire, passion, the unshakable conviction, the righteous anger, the self-sacrifice, unfaltering commitment, which carried them through so many long years of struggle without ever seeing their vision and goals achieved. Are these metaphors relevant to the lived experience of being a member of Prairie?

### **Sunday, December 10**

VeeraRaju (John) Eligenti and Rebecca Malke-Eligenti will talk about child labor and the caste system in India. Many believe the caste system ended with Mahatma Gandhi but the truth is this illegal practice still exists.

John is from Andhra Pradesh, India and worked for a nonprofit organization dealing with the rights of Dalits, or Untouchables. He also taught at a school for former child laborers. Rebecca volunteered at the school in 2003 and will talk about her experiences from an American point of view. Rebecca is our Youth Volunteer Coordinator.

### **Sunday, December 17**

Plan on joining us to share in elements of the beginning of the season in which the earth slumbers, preparing itself for its annual rebirth. There will be opportunities for the sharing of photos, artwork, tales, and poems by Prairie members. Please contact Dorothy Krause or watch Prairie News for requests for participants.

## Sunday, December 24

Erin Bosch will lead our traditional Symbol Tree service, which gives us all a chance to share something of ourselves, sing a few carols and enjoy the talents of our own Santa Lucia Girls and Little Drummer Boys.

## OUR SOCIETY

### PARISH MEETING DECEMBER 3

Agenda for the meeting:

1. Minutes of previous meetings
2. Treasurer's report
3. Resolution concerning the Wisconsin Network for Peace and Justice
4. Finance committee report and adoption of budget for the period January 1, 2007–June 30, 2008
5. Amendments to the bylaws:
  - a. Hospitality and membership committee
  - b. Minister
  - c. President and youth member
6. Reports of officers and committees as time permits

### PRAIRIE ELDERS MEETING

**Tuesday, November 28**, 2:00-3:50 PM,  
Oakwood Village West, Oaks Building, Exercise Room

DISCUSSION TOPIC: The November 7 Election

The EXERCISE ROOM will be open at 1:30 for those who wish to come early for casual conversation. Participants are welcome to come and go as necessary for appointments, rides, chair attendants, etc.

REFRESHMENTS: Please bring a handful of snacks to pass, if convenient. Beverages are furnished.

ABOUT US: Prairie Elders aims to provide good times and mutual support for Prairie UU Members and Friends over 65. We also welcome other UUs who live in the facility where we meet. For directions, rides, parking and further information, please contact Donna Murdoch 238-3802, Rosemary Dorney 238-4382 or Rose Smith 233-3363.

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

The next few years at Prairie are full of promise. Ralph Tyksinski, as you know, joined us this month as our consulting minister. His contract calls for quarter-time service, but to meet the requirements of the UU Ministers Association he has volunteered to serve us—without pay—for an additional quarter time.

I look forward to our working with Ralph to expand Prairie's growth, spiritually and intellectually, and in more tangible aspects—more members, a building more suited to our needs. With Rebecca Malke-Eligenti as coordinator, the religious education program goes from strength to strength. Careful planning for our new building continues.

We do not require a financial commitment to Prairie as a condition of membership. Prairie is a voluntary community. But, just as in our community we commit our hands, hearts and minds to Prairie and to each other, we also provide financial support for our efforts as best we can.

Prairie is switching its fiscal year from the January–December calendar year to one that more closely matches the church year, and that will run from July through June. To enable the switch, the next fiscal period will run from January 2007 through June 2008. That's why the numbers in the letter from Norma as chair of the Finance Committee are stated by the month, rather than the year, for better comparison with last year.

Prairie members and friends are being asked to pledge an average of \$117 a month for each of our 66 pledge units. Those of you who can will pledge more, as you have in the past. Those of you who cannot pledge that much will pledge what you can, as you have in the past. What's important is not how much you pledge, but the fact that we are all willing to support the joint venture of love and caring that is Prairie to the extent of our individual abilities, so that we can maintain our levels of adult and youth programming, pay for our professional staff, plan for continued growth, and support Unitarian-Universalism nationally and regionally.

Peace,

*Mike Briggs*  
*President*

## REV. RALPH'S RUMINATIONS

I have been learning much about our community here at Prairie during these past weeks. I would not be truthful if I did not say that during the coming months Prairie will be living with tensions and uncertainties.



Some philosophers of religion would describe this kind of experience as “living on the edge”. From my perspective as your Minister, that’s okay, because this is a time of living that can bring forth new possibilities and strengthening of membership.

A book that addresses this for UU’s and has been creating quite a stirring of responses among our congregations and ministers is: *The Almost Church: Redefining Unitarianism and Universalism for a New Era,*” by Michael Durall. Some of Durall’s assertions are disturbing, some are upsetting, a few take on a message of challenge and hopefulness.

You may or may not agree with Durall’s observation and whether it fits Prairie UU Society. “The congregation of the future is one that will recognize the unique ability of the church to radically alter a person’s worldview, and help people realize they are no longer the people they had once been. Too often we view Unitarian Universalist churches as safe havens, places of comfort that are perceived as a final destination rather than a port of embarkation. In the months ahead will Prairie consider itself to be more like a place of “taking off” rather than a place of “arrival”?

Are you willing to share in and work at creating Prairie as a place that promises to “radically alter your world view”?

Durall also makes the claim that being a member of a UU congregation is about compassion, dedication, commitment and sacrifice. “Unitarian Universalism has a proud history and tradition, one with its saints and martyrs. But what are our churches called to do in this place and time?

The primary purpose of the church is to create a community of compassion. All else flows from this. Unitarian Universalist churches should call their members to lead lives of dedication and

commitment—lives not just of success, but also of service, and, when called upon, sacrifice.”

In the weeks and months ahead can Prairie call upon its members/friends to take up the challenge of living a life of dedication and commitment—a life not just of success, but also of service, and, when called upon, sacrifice? As Prairie practices at this critical time of “living on the edge,” can it embrace what Michael Durall says of the future?

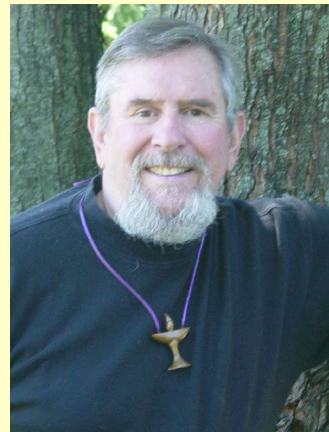
“Unitarian Universalism should be creating churches that make the world a more just, safe, and equitable place. This goal will not be accomplished if church leaders believe that their primary role is to accommodate the people who are already there. I have made the recommendation to numerous congregations that they discontinue the annual ‘satisfaction’ surveys. Our churches should not be in the satisfaction business. More important issues are at stake.”

From my perspective I have found in my service as a Minister in other UU congregations that when a consensus about self-identity has been achieved; when an unshakable commitment to a mission is fully embraced and a vision that is defined with measurable stages of success, then members will step forward to pledge generously toward making their congregational goals a reality; pledging generously of one’s time, talents and financial support.

May the coming months of “living on the edge” achieve the goals that passionate, committed and self-giving people can have for becoming the best Prairie UU Society imaginable!

With all due encouragement and support,

*Rev. Ralph*



## FUNDRAISING TRIP CANCELED

The fundraising shopping trip for **December 10** has been canceled.

## UPCOMING PARTIES AND EVENTS

Prairie members are invited to several special celebrations in the next few weeks:

Maggie Siegfried concert, "Grateful I'm Not Dead" Sunday, **November 26**, 7:00 p.m. at Prairie. Maggie and her band play some of their favorite country, swing, Hawaiian, standards, and original music in gratitude for their friends and supporters. Refreshments will be served. Donations will be gratefully accepted.

Andy Somers' 70th Birthday Party Saturday, **December 2**, 5:00-8:30 p.m. at Prairie. All Prairie people are invited to attend. There will be food, music and fun with Maggie Siegfried performing. No gifts please. This is a peanut-free event. RSVP to marysomers44@charter.net or 276-8397.

Doleta Chapru's 70th Birthday Party Wednesday, **December 13**, 7:30-9:30??? "I'm Alive and Kickin' in the Way I Want to Be." Fats Domino's title says it all. Come kick up your heels or gently tap your toes to Fat's CD made from masters found in his flooded New Orleans apartment. Munch Susan Hagstrom's yummy cake. Enjoy a fun ice breaker. Sing some of Doleta's tunes and doggerel (folk musicians are welcome to play along). Yak with friends (we'll keep the music down except for spurts of rowdiness). Jitterbug to a 50s potpourri. Play a game or two. Or just sit and enjoy the party. If space permits, we'll dance a few easy circle dances for the low-impact set and maybe toss in a wild Turkish hora for folks still young in the joints. Please, no gifts. Cards, including homemade ones with your own drawings or sentiments, would be great.

### Choral Arts Society

"Carols and Shaped Notes" is a concert that features music from the early New England tradition, and includes three Prairie members (Metje Butler, Dan Proud, and Dean Schroeder). Two free concerts will be held Friday, **December 8** at 7:00 p.m. at Oakwood West and Friday, **December 15** at 8:00 p.m. at Immanuel Lutheran Church, 1021 Spaight St.

## PRAIRIE FILM GROUP

Nominated for three Academy Awards and the winner of the Cannes Golden Palm, Francis Ford Coppola's 1974 film, *The Conversation*, has been described an "Orwellian morality play." Gene Hackman appears as Henry Caul, a bugging-device expert completely immersed in his work. But, he begins to develop a conscience.

Released in the midst of the Watergate and Nixon tapes investigations, this film has achieved a prominent place in many critics' all-time favorite lists. It also features John Cazale, Allen Garfield, Cindy Williams, and Harrison Ford. Prairie show time is Thursday, **December 7** at 7 p.m., sharp.

## FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE LETTER

The budget recommended by the Board for 2007-2008 calls for Prairie to spend \$8,583.55 a month. Last year's budget called for spending \$7,148.75 a month. If it's approved by the parish on **December 3**, that would be an increase of 17 percent, just to continue our day-to-day operations, not to raise funds for capital projects. I can hear you asking: why?

To begin with, we have proposed modest wage increases for our paid staff. Secondly, we have provided for repairs and replacements to our meeting house, as recommended by the Housing and Property Committee. Finally, we decided to establish a \$20,000 reserve fund for emergencies, future planning and unanticipated expenditures.

And don't forget that paying our fair share in dues to the UUA and the Central Midwest District together will cost us \$889 a month.

Last year you pledged a total of \$5,122 a month to support the monthly operating budget. We sought pledges of \$85,785.00. Thanks to you all, we should end 2006 with a modest operating surplus to build up our reserve fund. This year, we're asking that you pledge a total of \$7,725 a month. That computes to an average of \$117 a month for each of our 66 pledge units. Give more if you can, but in any case give as much as you can afford. Prairie is on the move. Let's keep it moving!

*(continued)*

The Unitarian Universalist Association Suggested Share Giving Guide recommends that members consider giving at least 2½ per cent of gross income. The Finance Committee is asking that all members and friends give at or above this level if at all possible. It is important that some members commit to higher levels of giving to offset others whose means do not allow them to contribute at this level.

The chart that follows may help you determine your 2007-2008 pledge.

Gross Monthly pledge at Annual percent of income	Gross Monthly pledge at Annual percent of income			Gross Monthly pledge at Annual percent of income	Gross Monthly pledge at Annual percent of income		
	Income 2%	5%	10%		Income 2%	5%	10%
\$15,000	25	62.50	125	\$60,000	100	250	500
\$20,000	33	83	167	\$65,000	108	271	542
\$25,000	42	104	208	\$70,000	117	292	583
\$30,000	50	125	250	\$75,000	125	312.50	625
\$35,000	58	146	292	\$80,000	133	333	666
\$40,000	67	167	333	\$85,000	142	354	708
\$45,000	75	188.50	375	\$90,000	150	375	750
\$50,000	83	208	417	\$95,000	158	396	791
\$55,000	92	229	458	\$100,000	167	417	833

These are the major categories of the proposed 2007-2008 Prairie budget, per month:

Program	\$ 208.33
Religious Education	\$1,003.72
Denominational Affairs	\$ 723.89
Long Range Planning	\$ 644.44
Hospitality	\$ 186.75
Housing and Property	\$2,334.50
Administration	\$ 859.50
Minister	\$2,260.33
Contingency	\$1,111.11

There may be some tweaking of the proposed budget prior to the Parish Meeting, but the Board and the Finance Committee will be sure to let you know the details. You are welcome to ask for more details at any time—do not wait for the Parish Meeting—e-mail Mike or Norma Briggs or Dirk Herr-Hoyman.

*Prairie Finance Committee*  
*Norma Briggs, Chair*

## DECEMBER 10 BOOK CLUB SELECTION

The Prairie Book Club's December selection is *Gaviotas: A Village to Reinvent the World* by Alan Weisman. It's about a community of artists, scientists, engineers, and musicians who intentionally sought a difficult place to test their theories and inventions in Colombia. If they could form a self-sustaining community in the rural tropics, they felt they could become a beacon of light for the world.

This book comes highly recommended from Doleta Chapru, who introduced it to Prairie during the "Summer Reads" service in August. She found it a ray of light in a world of dark and dreary news.

Remember that there's a link to the poster of our book club selections on Prairie's Web site. See <http://uuprairie.org/NovDecBooks.htm> or find the page through the Prairie calendar entries for the book club meeting.

The Prairie Book Club meets monthly after the Sunday service at Prairie, usually every second Sunday. Bring food to share.

Anyone who has read the book or simply wants to listen to the discussion is welcome to attend.

## 2007 Book Club Selections

Sunday, January 14. *The Memory Keeper's Daughter* by Kim Edwards. Fiction, about the decision of a doctor to secretly send his newborn daughter with Downs syndrome to an institution. 432 pages.

Sunday, February 11. *A Crack in the Edge of the World: America and the Great California Earthquake of 1906*, by Simon Winchester. Nonfiction, about the 1906 San Francisco earthquake. 480 pages.

Sunday, March 11. *Until I Find You: A Novel*, by John Irving. Fiction, "the story of the actor Jack Burns—his life, loves, celebrity and astonishing search for the truth about his parents." 848 pages.

Sunday, April 8. *Confessions of an Economic Hit Man*, by John Perkins. Non-fiction, "a former respected member of the international banking community describes how as a highly-paid professional, he helped the U.S. cheat poor countries around the globe out of trillions of dollars by lending them more money than they

could possibly repay and then take over their economies.” (Democracy Now). 320 pages.

Sunday, June 10. *Eats, Shoots & Leaves: The Zero Tolerance Approach to Punctuation*, by Lynne Truss and Bonnie Timmons. 228 pages.

Sunday, July 8. Choose your own book on contemporary political thought. We'll each present our own book. In group discussion we will compare and contrast what we read.

### **NEW AND IMPROVED TRAINING FOR IHN**

This is a reminder of our next Interfaith Hospitality Network (IHN) volunteer shift, **January 14–21**. As a Buddy Church, Prairie continues to offer a steady contribution of volunteers to help Midvale Lutheran host homeless families during this scheduled week. Thank you to all who have helped in the past year: Erin Bosch, Kathy Converse, Nancy Garst, Dave and Marcia Johnson, Orange Schroeder, Phoenix Wardell, and Paula Pachciarz.

New volunteers are welcome to join us in this vital community ministry. You are especially encouraged to attend one of IHN's frequent "No Place Like Home" Information Sessions. You will meet some of the staff and board members and hear about the variety of services IHN provides for families in shelter and housing. After the session, you will receive a training packet to read.

Sessions are at the IHN Day Center at 1121 University Ave. Please RSVP to [lsundbergattds.net](mailto:lsundbergattds.net) or call 294-7998, ext. 301. These sessions replace the 2-hour volunteer training sessions which were offered previously.

You may contact me to find out more about how you can help. Also, the IHN Web site is an excellent place for an overview of this organization and its mission: [www.madison.com/communities/ihn/](http://www.madison.com/communities/ihn/)

IHN Information Session: Tuesday, **December 12** at 5:30

IHN Weeks in 2007:

1/14-1/21 Midvale Community Lutheran

3/11-3/18 Midvale Community Lutheran

9/16-9/23 Midvale Lutheran

11/11-11/18 Midvale Community Lutheran

*Paula Pachciarz*

### **WHAT IS THE CARING COMMITTEE?**

Who at Prairie can come visit you or someone in your family when you are in the hospital? Who at Prairie can you contact if you come home from surgery and would appreciate seeing a friend or having some meals delivered? Who can be a caring person to share in a family death or other crisis? Who can you talk to if you are feeling a little overwhelmed and want a friendly ear?

The Prairie Caring Committee is here for Prairie members to be able to feel they can depend on someone for support in times of need. As a religious community, we want to reach out and provide support when you need it. Members of the Caring Committee each attempts to maintain contact with a group of members, but we need your calls to best support you and others in the society.

If you or someone else in Prairie need caring support, please contact any of the members of the committee or our Consulting Minister, Rev. Ralph Tyksinski (608-873-6041), who has graciously agreed to work with the committee.

Members of the committee are: Dean Schroeder (256-8813), KK Anderson (279-3596), Erin Bosch (238-6285), Robin Proud (661-0776), Linda Sheehy (273-3895), and Aileen Nettleton (238-6053).

There is a list of the Caring Groups on the Bulletin Board in the meeting room, and in the near future we will also send out a message to the Prairie News to remind you whose group you are in. If you cannot reach the committee member who is your main contact person, please call any member and we will try to help get the response you need.

### **UUSC GUEST AT YOUR TABLE STARTS DECEMBER 10**

The annual Guest at Your Table fundraising program for the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) kicks off on Sunday, **December 10** at Prairie. Guest at Your Table boxes will be available, and materials describing the worldwide UU-connected service programs will be distributed.

## HUMANIST UNION PLANS CELEBRATION

**December 17**, 12:30 to 2:30 p.m., is the time picked by the Humanist Union for our HumanLight Celebration this year. We plan a potluck dinner, group singing of humanist-friendly songs, and other entertainment and fun for humanists in the greater Madison area and their families and friends. For more details, see <http://humanist.madisonwi.us/events.htm>.

HumanLight is a holiday celebration that reflects the inclusive, caring, compassionate ideals of Humanism, with "light" in the name evoking these and other shared humanist values, such as reason and hope, that "light up our lives". At a time of year when holiday celebrations grounded in supernatural beliefs can separate people along religious lines, it provides us with an alternative celebration that expresses our hope for a just and peaceful world without deep religious divisions. (See <http://www.humanlight.org/> for more on HumanLight.)

## CHOIR HAS 2 WEEKS OFF

There will be no Prairie choir rehearsal on **December 24** and **December 31**.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

### RE GETS READY FOR THE HOLIDAYS

I've noticed that the holiday season is being celebrated earlier and earlier every year. I noticed Christmas decorations in stores as early as August and being placed next to the Halloween displays. What happened to Thanksgiving?

I'm glad to know Prairie hasn't forgotten my favorite holiday. Our Thanksgiving intergenerational service had Prairie children, members and friends making cut-out shapes of their hands and telling people what they are thankful for then placing those hands on the tree of gratitude.

If you don't think you already have enough going on for the month of December, Prairie RE has two more fun activities for you to attend. The Central Midwest District has two conferences for youth and young adults in December. **December 1–3** will be a Youth Spiritual Development Conference

in Park Forest, Ill., and on **December 8–9** will be a mini-CON in Chicago. If you are interested in attending or would like to chaperone let me know.

On **December 10**, my husband, John, and I will be talking about child labor in India and Dalit rights. John will talk about his experiences as a co-HR director for a nonprofit organization and a teacher for a child labor school. Three years ago I had the opportunity to volunteer at the school. I was deeply moved by the children and being with them changed my life forever. In the spirit of giving we are hoping to raise money for the children so they can have a gift for Christmas.

Last year I sent \$50 and the school was able to buy all 30 of the boys a new outfit. RE students also will have the chance to make cards to send to the children in India.

**December 17** is our annual Nifty Gifty. This will be my first Nifty Gifty and I'm told it's a fun and crazy time. All of the RE children will be downstairs making gifts for friends and family using simple materials. I believe that making something out of love using your own two hands and not buying expensive gifts for the sake of buying them is what gift-giving should be all about. We tend to forget that, myself included. This year, however, I'm hoping for something made out of pipe cleaners and seashells!

If you would like to help out or make something of your own, you are all more than welcome to come downstairs to join the festivities!

*Rebecca Malke*  
[youthcoordinator@uuprairie.org](mailto:youthcoordinator@uuprairie.org)

## PRAIRIE WEB SITES

Society Home Page: <http://uuprairie.org/>

News Group:  
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/prairienews/>

Views:  
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/prairieviews/>

Social Action: <http://socialaction.madisonwi.us>

Humanist Union: <http://humanist.madisonwi.us>



## UNITARIAN-UNIVERSALIST NEWS

### BLOOD DRIVE AT FUS ON SATURDAY

Please note that there will be a Red Cross blood drive at the First Unitarian Society (FUS) on Saturday morning, **November 25**, between 8 a.m. and noon. This is an opportunity for all area UUs to give this precious gift to our community. Blood is urgently needed as we start the holiday season. You can ask questions or make a donation appointment by emailing Anne Mosser at [agmosser@tds.net](mailto:agmosser@tds.net).

Thanks!

Anne Mosser  
[agmosser@wisc.edu](mailto:agmosser@wisc.edu)

### GENERAL ASSEMBLY VIDEO NIGHTS AT FUS

Prairie members are welcome to enjoy Monday video nights at First Unitarian Society (FUS) at 7:00 p.m. The FUS Denominational Affairs Committee is showing the following DVDs from the 2006 GA in the next few weeks.

Monday, **November 27**: Plenary III—Beacon Press report; Starr King report; presentation of O. Eugene Pickett award; Breakthrough Congregation: Unitarian Universalist Church of Annapolis; Implementation of past Statements of Conscience; Debate on Statement of Conscience: Threat of Global Warming; Review of potential Actions of Immediate Witness.

Monday, **December 4**: Report on Youth Ministry in Our Association with Beth Dana, Megan McDowdell, Jesse Jaeger (son of Jim and Karen Jaeger) and Julian Sharp. Members of the Task Force will report on the lessons learned so far from widespread UU surveying and congregational dialogues, how the process will move forward in the next year, and ways to be involved.

Monday, **December 11**: Meg Barnhouse and Radio Free Bubba with Rev. Meg Barnhouse and Rev. Pat Jobe. The author of "Waking Up the Karma Fairy" and her performance partner give us an hilarious and moving mix of smartmouth Southern social commentary, soulful wisdom for living in an illiberal age, and original songs like "A.D.D. Blues" and "If You Ever Get to Thinking You're Jesus" You will leave energized.

Monday, **December 18**: DEEP-TIME EYES: Evolutionary Inspiration for Troubled Times. The UU Process Theology Network Presents Rev. Michael Dowd. This high-energy presentation by "America's evolutionary evangelist" explores how the 4-billion-year epic of evolution can inspire us (individually and collectively) to harness collective intelligence and create a just, healthy, beautiful, sustainably life-giving future for all species.

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### JOURNEY TOWARD WHOLENESS (JTW) NEWS

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Dear JTW-News Readers:

The UUA, along with the UU United Nations Office and the UU Global Aids Coalition are participating in "For Whom the Bell Tolls" Vigils on World AIDS Day, Dec. 1st. President William Sinkford will be in Washington on that day to participate in coalition events and advocacy efforts. We invite congregations to join this initiative and we have created a planning guide with worship and resource materials for congregational use and participation.

Each new HIV infection worldwide will be marked by ringing bells, lighting candles, or beating drums every eighth second in front of Congressional offices; at their churches, synagogues, temples, and other houses of worship; on their college campuses; and in public spaces. Join in this movement by signing up to host an event in your area. Use the planning guide to help you organize logistics, recruit speakers and media, and take effective advocacy actions. See the UUA Washington Office pages at <http://www.uua.org/uuawo/new/> for materials, to sign up, and for more information.

As we prepare to give thanks, let's remember and advocate for and with those suffering from AIDs.

In faith,

*Susan Leslie, UUA Director for Congregational Advocacy and Witness,*  
(617) 948-4607; [sleslie@uua.org](mailto:sleslie@uua.org)

## **PREVENTION THAT EMPOWERS**

World AIDS Day, the global day of action and remembrance on HIV/AIDS, takes place every December 1. Now in its 19th year, World AIDS Day is about increasing awareness and education and fighting prejudice. WAD reminds the world that HIV/AIDS persists, and that there are many things still left to be done.

This year, the Unitarian Universalist Global AIDS Coalition (UUGAC), the Unitarian Universalist Association Washington Office for Advocacy (UUA-WOA), and the Unitarian Universalist United Nations Office (UU-UNO) encourage all UUs to get involved in the global fight against HIV/AIDS. To assist UUs in this urgent work, we have created a resource packet, *Prevention That Empowers*, to educate individuals and congregations, to facilitate global HIV/AIDS focused worship, to inform and encourage advocacy, and to create collaborative action.

On **December 1**, World AIDS Day, wearing the Red Ribbon will remind us that HIV is an issue for everyone. We need your help to encourage your community and the broader public to "Wise Up and Wear It" as a sign of support for people living with HIV and as a symbol of hope for the future.

We hope the resource packet will inspire and guide UUs to act in a meaningful way as part of a global effort to fight HIV/AIDS. You can access the packet at [www.uu-uno.org/?q=taxonomy\\_menu/2/7/84](http://www.uu-uno.org/?q=taxonomy_menu/2/7/84).

Please get involved and campaign to make December 1, 2006 the most effective, captivating World AIDS Day yet!

## **UUSC HOLIDAY CARDS AVAILABLE**

Support UUSC while sharing the spirit of the season. Your purchase of unique UUSC holiday cards will help us advance human rights and social justice in the United States and around the world.

We are proud to announce this year's contest winner is: "Be the Light" by Alex Leaver of First Parish Church in Plymouth, Mass.

To view this year's cards and to order, go to <http://www.uusc.org/holidaycards>. You can also call 617-868-6600.

## **DIOCESE ATTEMPTS TO SILENCE GAY ACTIVIST**

### **Scraps Unitarian Congregation's Lease**

The Diocese of Camden, New Jersey, leased space for three years to the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the South Jersey Shore. Now, the UU congregation has been forced out of their leased space without warning because of their commitment to truth.

Gay author/activist Marc Adams was scheduled to share his personal story and speak about HeartStrong, a non-profit educational organization providing outreach and support to gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered students from religious educational institutions on November 5.

On Thursday, November 2, 2006, Father Pat Lavin of the Catholic Campus Ministry Center called Betsy Searight, church administrator for the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the South Jersey Shore. Father Lavin reported that he had received numerous phone calls from the Knights of Columbus expressing their disapproval of Marc Adams' program. Father Lavin said he was concerned that he would be fired if the Sunday service with Marc Adams as guest speaker went ahead as publicized in a local newspaper.

The Board of Directors for the UUCSJS chose to go forward as planned with the Sunday service. On Friday, November 3, 2006, a lawyer for the Diocese of Camden, New Jersey, stating that the UUCSJS' lease was null and void and the service would not be permitted to go on as scheduled.

After a direct response from the church's lawyer, the Diocese backed off, temporarily indicating a fear of public scrutiny of their actions. The church has since been directed that their lease is still terminated. The UU church is investigating the legality of the termination as well as the anti-gay discriminatory position against the message of Marc Adams and HeartStrong.

HeartStrong has provided outreach and support to gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered students from religious educational institutions for ten years. Marc Adams is a co-founder and volunteer executive director.

"There is nothing wrong with our message," Adams states. "For over ten years we have

provided hope and help to many people from religious schools. About one-third of the students who come to us for assistance are from Catholic schools. They are victims of the same intimidation tactics that have been used here against the UUCSJS."

While the UUCSJS pursues legal options, Adams and HeartStrong demand an apology.

*Marc Adams, Executive Director, HeartStrong, Inc., [marcadams@heartstrong.org](mailto:marcadams@heartstrong.org)  
<http://www.heartstrong.org>; 206-351-9993*

## OTHER NEWS

### INTERFAITH AWARENESS WEEK ANNOUNCED

The Ninth Annual Interfaith Awareness Week in Wisconsin (December 10-16, 2006) is less than one month away. Since 1998, the Governor and the Dane County Executive have proclaimed the week inclusive of Human Rights Day as Interfaith Awareness Week. In 1999, the Mayor of Madison joined the annual proclamation. This year, the Mayors of Middleton and Monona will be proclaiming this special week as well.

It is very exciting to report events throughout the week in the Greater Madison area. The humble beginnings included an Interfaith Awareness Day at the Main Branch of the Madison Public Library in 1998. In 2002, the first annual Interfaith Awareness Celebration was held in the Capitol Rotunda.

That year was also the first for public displays of world faith traditions in Wisconsin in the capitol for the entire week.

This year, a multifaith committee has worked on coordinating a variety of locations and times for Interfaith Awareness Week events. Although details of presenters at each event are still being worked on, each event already has more than 4 different faith traditions represented in the programs.

There are commitments for more than 14 displays of different faith traditions at the Capitol. Some of these displays will be previewed at the Middleton

kickoff event Sunday afternoon.

Some of the faith traditions already involved include: Baha'i, Buddhist, Christian (several denominations), Eckankar, Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Sufi Order of the West, Unity, Wiccan.

There is still room for more to be involved. If a group or individual is interested, please contact the coordinator information below.

Here are the confirmed events of IAW9:

Through December 18, interfaith book display at Monona Public Library

For the month of December, interfaith book display at Middleton Public Library

Interfaith book displays at Madison Public Library - Main Branch & Lakeview Branch

December 10 - Sunday, 2 p.m.  
Good Neighbor Interfaith Celebration  
Middleton Public Library, Archer Room  
7425 Hubbard Avenue, Middleton

December 11-15 - Monday thru Friday  
Displays of Wisconsin Faiths, Capitol Rotunda

December 11 - Monday, 7 p.m.  
Dane County Interfaith Awareness Celebration & Universal Worship, Meriter Retirement Community, Health Center Auditorium  
334 W. Doty Street, Madison

December 12 - Tuesday, 12 noon  
5th Annual Wisconsin Interfaith Awareness Celebration in the Capitol, Capitol Rotunda

December 14 - Thursday, 6 p.m.  
Madison Interfaith Awareness Celebration  
Madison Public Library - Lakeview Branch  
2845 N. Sherman Avenue, Madison

December 16 - Saturday, 10a.m.  
Monona Interfaith Awareness Celebration  
Monona Public Library, 1000 Nichols Road, Monona

For more information:

<http://interfaithsociety.blogspot.com>  
(608) 236-9622, or e-mail [inroads@minister.com](mailto:inroads@minister.com)